

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1 1. A method for configuring a build-to-order system, comprising:
 2 (a) providing a list of configuration choices, said list comprising available system
 3 elements with which said build-to-order system are configured;
 4 (b) receiving a system configuration selection based on a combination of system
 5 elements selected from said list of configuration choices; and
 6 (c) providing a description of a function capable of being implemented with said
 7 system configuration selection.

1 2. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
 2 (a) receiving an updated system configuration selection; and
 3 (b) providing an updated description of a function capable of being implemented with
 4 said updated system configuration selection.

1 3. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said list of configuration
 2 choices is presented in a graphical user interface.

1 4. The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of said available
 2 system elements in said list of configuration choices being represented by an icon.

1 5. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of
 2 developing a personal user history file for each user.

1 6. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein said description of a function
 2 includes customized information pertaining to each user.

1 7. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein said personal history file
 2 includes at least one of a list of prior purchases, a list of browsed products, a current
 3 component configuration, and user-provided personal characteristic information.

1 8. The method as claimed in claim1, wherein said description of function
2 capable of being implemented with said system configuration selection includes at least
3 one of advantages of said selection, suggestions for other selections, and comparison
4 information regarding said selection and a product currently being utilized by a user.

[illegible]

1 9. A program of instructions impressible upon a medium capable of being
2 read by an information appliance for causing an information appliance to implement steps
3 for aiding a user in the selection of components for a build-to-order system, the steps
4 comprising:

- 5 (a) providing a list of configuration choices, said list comprising available system
6 elements with which the system may be configured;
7 (b) receiving a system configuration selection based on a combination of system
8 elements selected from said list of configuration choices; and
9 (c) providing a description of a function capable of being implemented with said
10 system configuration selection.

1 10. The program of instructions as claimed in claim 9, further comprising the
2 steps of:

- 3 (a) receiving an updated system configuration selection; and
4 (b) providing an updated description of a function capable of being implemented with
5 said updated system configuration selection.

1 11. The program of instructions as claimed in claim 9, wherein said list of
2 configuration choices is presented in a graphical user interface.

1 12. The program of instructions as claimed in claim 9, wherein at least one of
2 said available system elements in said list of configuration choices being represented by
3 an icon.

1 13. The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the step of
2 developing a personal user history file for each user.

1 14. The program of instructions as claimed in claim 13, wherein said
2 description of a function includes customized information pertaining to each user.

1 15. The program of instructions as claimed in claim 13, wherein said personal
2 history file includes at least one of a list of prior purchases, a list of browsed products, a
3 current component configuration, and user-provided personal characteristic information.

1 16. The program of instructions as claimed in claim 9, wherein said
2 description of function capable of being implemented with said system configuration
3 selection includes at least one of advantages of said selection, suggestions for other
4 selections, and comparison information regarding said selection and a product currently
5 being utilized by a user.

[illegible]

1 17. A system for aiding a user in the selection of products for a build-to-
2 order system, comprising:

- 3 (a) means for providing a list of configuration choices, said list comprising available
4 system elements with which said system may be configured;
5 (b) means for receiving a system configuration selection based on a combination of
6 system elements selected from said list of configuration choices; and
7 (c) means for providing a description of a function capable of being implemented
8 with said system configuration selection.

1 18. The system as claimed in claim 17, further comprising:

- 2 (a) means for receiving an updated system configuration selection; and
3 (b) means for providing an updated description of a function capable of being
4 implemented with said updated system configuration selection.

1 19. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said list of configuration
2 choices is presented in a graphical user interface.

1 20. The system as claimed in claim 17, wherein at least one of said available
2 system elements in said list of configuration choices being represented by an icon.

1 21. The system as claimed in claim 17, further comprising means for
2 developing a personal user history file for each user.

1 22. The system as claimed in claim 21, wherein said description of a function
2 includes customized information pertaining to each user.

1 23. The system as claimed in claim 21, wherein said personal history file
2 includes at least one of a list of prior purchases, a list of browsed products, a current
3 component configuration, and user-provided personal characteristic information.

- 1 24. The system as claimed in claim1, wherein said description of function
2 capable of being implemented with said system configuration selection includes at least
3 one of advantages of said selection, suggestions for other selections, and comparison
4 information regarding said selection and a product currently being utilized by a user.

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